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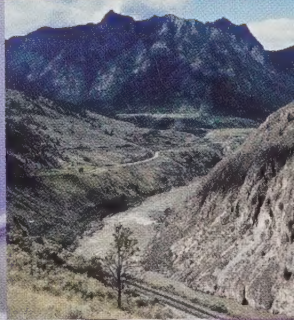
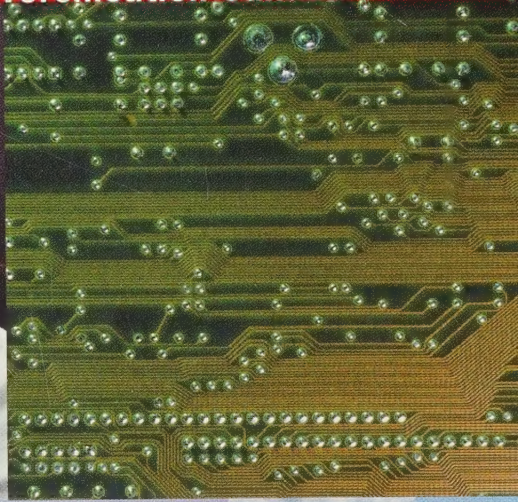
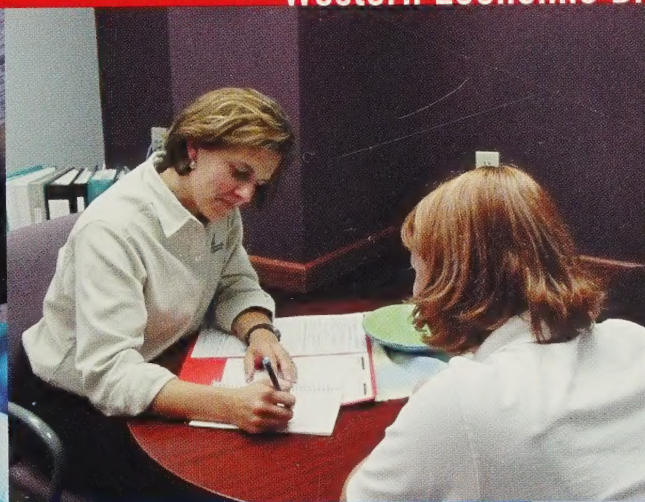
Government  
Publications

Western Economic  
Diversification Canada

Canada

# Working with the West

Western Economic Diversification Canada





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## The Power and Potential of the West

*I am delighted to take on a new role as the Secretary of State for this dynamic department. In looking forward to the challenges ahead I see a linkage of interests and opportunities with my dual responsibility of Secretary of State for Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Future justice and prosperity in Western Canada will be linked to the full participation of Aboriginal people in the overall economic development of the West.*

*To maintain its pride of place and to realize its full potential, Western Canada must capitalize on its strengths, diversify its opportunities and continue to reinvent itself – ensuring equality of opportunity for all.*

*Working with the West, the Government of Canada and Western Economic Diversification Canada are providing programs and services that maximize the most valuable resources available – the talents, energy and ideas of western Canadians.*

*The West is still a very young region filled with vast opportunity and tremendous potential. Through innovation, entrepreneurship and partnerships, Western Canada will become a more vital competitor in the global marketplace over the next 100 years. I invite you to read on to learn more about WD's contribution to the prosperity of the West.*

– The Honourable Stephen Owen  
Secretary of State  
(Western Economic Diversification)  
(Indian Affairs and Northern Development)



## Strengthening the Western Economy

Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD) strengthens the western economy through programs and services that inspire innovation, encourage entrepreneurship, build partnerships and provide sound economic research. WD administers Government of Canada programs in the four western provinces and advances western interests in national economic policy. Western Canadians are directly involved in determining priorities for development and deciding on the best use of resources.

As part of the Industry Portfolio, led by Industry Canada, WD supports the development and growth of a western Canadian economy that is innovative, inclusive, sustainable and diversified.

Since 1987, Western Economic Diversification Canada has evolved with changing economic pressures and has virtually eliminated direct financial support to small and medium-sized businesses. To date, its \$2.4-billion investment in Western Canada has produced results that help move the West more strongly into the knowledge-based economy, build small businesses and consolidate partnerships in both the public and private sector to share the costs of major new initiatives. In all its activities, WD is focused on the business life of the West and on providing services to people who want to get ahead. This happens in small and large ways by:

- helping small business owners prepare business plans and hire the best and brightest graduates
- linking businesses to partners who can help them compete in an ever-changing economy
- supporting the development of new and innovative technologies.

WD's strategic directions place a priority on investing in innovation, maintaining a broad network of support to entrepreneurs, and strengthening partnerships with governments, industry, academic and business communities.



# Innovation: The Future of the West

Western Canada is on the leading edge of technologies that hold great promise for a better quality of life today and a better future for the next generation. Through the development of knowledge-based industries, the West is shifting from a reliance on external resources to a belief in internal resourcefulness. This shift will cushion the impact of fluctuating commodity prices and broaden the base of local economies.

WD is working to close the gap between the discovery of new ideas and processes and the marketing of new products and services. Investments in innovation are:

- strengthening the knowledge infrastructure in the West
- leveraging new funding to increase research and development
- accelerating the rate of technology commercialization
- supporting “innovation clusters” in key sectors of the western economy
- encouraging change to make organizations more productive and innovative.

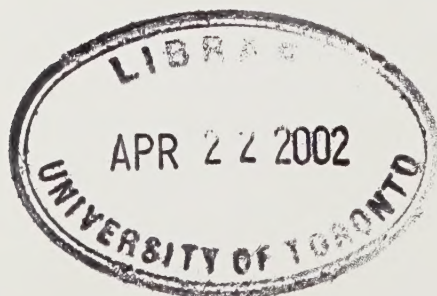
Innovation clusters include all the components needed to grow and sustain a knowledge-based industry – from research and development centres to manufacturing plants and related suppliers. This synergy stimulates innovative approaches to product design and competitive methods of marketing. The investment spurs growth and creates jobs locally while establishing a leadership position for the industry nationally and internationally. Innovation is a key driver of productivity and long-term economic growth.

## WestLink Technology Commercialization Internship Program

*Although Canada has an outstanding track record in creating new knowledge, we have an acute shortage of technology managers with the know-how to convert knowledge into innovation and economic benefit. We believe WestLink can make a real difference.*

– Tom Brzustowski, President, National Science and Engineering Research Council of Canada

In partnership with the WestLink Innovation Network and the four western provinces, Western Economic Diversification is addressing the shortage of trained technology development managers in Western Canada. The WestLink Technology Commercialization Internship program provides science and technology graduates with intensive, real-life experience in technology commercialization at universities, venture capital firms and high-technology spin-off companies. Developed by WestLink and member universities, the two-year program helps interns understand the issues that affect the successful commercialization of new inventions.





# Innovation: The Future of the West

## Telecommunications Research Laboratories

*At TR Labs, we are striving to be the best pre-competitive research organization in Canada. We play a leadership role in developing the highly skilled people and new technologies that can transform western Canadian technology businesses into world leaders. We are aiming to create new businesses based on TR Labs technologies. Ambitious? Yes. Visionary? Yes. But with partners like Western Economic Diversification (WD), we've had 15 years of experience with turning ambition and vision into reality. TR Labs looks forward to the next 15 years of collaboration and productivity with partners like WD, provincial governments, industry and universities.*

— Roger Pederson, Chief Operating Officer,  
TRLabs

*We are grateful to Western Economic Diversification for its commitment and support of genomic research. The addition of this new equipment will greatly enhance our ability to realize our vision of a Genome Sequence Centre that will advance our scientific expertise and, with hope and hard work, lead us to significant advances in new cancer treatments, cures and prevention strategies.*

— Dr. Victor Ling, Co-Director and Vice-President  
Research, BC Cancer Agency Genome  
Sequence Centre

Telecommunications Research Laboratories (TRLabs) is Canada's leading research consortium for Information and Communications Technology (ICT). TR Labs creates innovative technologies and trains students to enhance Canada's ICT expertise and competitiveness. Labs in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta employ more than 200 researchers, industry professionals, professors, students and support staff.

TRLabs focuses on five strategic areas: data networking, network access, network systems, photonics and wireless communications. Its 40 member sponsors represent a unique synergy of industry, government and universities. They include telecommunications companies, multinational equipment manufacturers, emerging ICT businesses, the provincial governments of Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, and Western Economic Diversification Canada. Over the past 15 years, TR Labs has trained nearly 700 highly skilled university graduates, created 250 technologies adopted for use by industry, and generated over 40 patented inventions.





## SPOTLIGHT ON INNOVATION

### British Columbia...Merging Science, Business and Multimedia

*Over the next five years, the New Media Innovation Centre will become a vibrant, significant research facility that will position Canada at the forefront of the multibillion-dollar new media industry. Investment in this state-of-the-art virtual reality centre will serve as a catalyst to attract researchers, engineers, animators, filmmakers and other leading minds from the new media field to Vancouver."*

— Dr. Alan Winter, CEO of the New Media Innovation Centre, Vancouver

By supporting the New Media Innovation Centre (NewMIC) in Vancouver, Western Economic Diversification is playing a significant role in promoting the integration of science, commerce, arts and entertainment. NewMIC is a nonprofit organization managed by universities and companies engaged in new media technologies. It will research and commercialize advanced, interactive media products as well as assemble a critical mass of technical expertise.

WD has also supported NewMIC in building a Virtual Reality Centre. This centre creates a virtual environment where researchers can conduct design engineering work, product prototyping and product testing. It gives B.C. businesses a competitive edge in the global marketplace by allowing them to simulate new products before they are built. These simulations reduce the time and cost needed to develop new products for market.

### Alberta...Leading the Way in Biotechnology and Nanosciences

*The University of Alberta's recent successes in nanosystems, synchrotron research and biotechnology are the direct result of federal investments in areas of recognized research strength. Further collaborations are under consideration that will advance research in areas of direct economic benefit and further the industrial development of Western Canada.*

— Dr. R. Gary Kachanoski, Vice-President (Research), University of Alberta, Edmonton

Western Economic Diversification is helping industry create a dynamic future in advanced biotechnology by supporting initiatives in genomics and proteomics (the study of genes and proteins). WD is providing financing for collaborative studies that will revolutionize approaches in health sciences, agriculture, forestry and environmental sectors. One example is the Nuclear Resonance Centre at the University of Alberta, where scientists conduct research in chemistry, biochemistry and biotechnology.

WD is actively supporting initiatives to build Alberta and western Canadian capabilities in micro and nanosciences. Funding has been provided to the Microfabrication Facility and Microsystems Technology Research Institute (MSTRI) at the University of Alberta. MSTRI fosters the creation and transfer of microsystems technology to Canadian industry. Microsystems represent the convergence of microelectronics, information technology and life sciences. They are used in health and diagnostic equipment, sensor development and fibre optic devices.





## Saskatchewan...Generating Scientific and Economic Benefits

*Western Economic Diversification has been a very active partner in helping to make this tremendous new research tool for science and innovation happen. This University of Saskatchewan-owned, national facility will have a unique focus among synchrotron facilities, with a strong commitment to private-public partnerships and serving industrial users along with the traditional focus on innovative academic research. We look forward to working with WD in new technology application and product innovation once the Canadian Light Source synchrotron is operating in January of 2004.*

— Dr. Michael Bancroft, Director, Canadian Light Source, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon

Western Economic Diversification is a catalyst for the Canadian Light Source (CLS) synchrotron, the country's biggest scientific project in three decades. This "super microscope" will generate powerful beams of light capable of isolating the microscopic nature of matter.

WD is contributing over \$20 million, channeling funding from other federal sources and creating a partnership that includes 18 universities, major industry contributors and three levels of government. The CLS is an excellent example of WD investment creating local impact with global implications.

Construction of the \$174-million facility at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon is expected to create over 500 jobs a year. More than 200 world-class scientists, technicians and staff will work at the CLS when it becomes operational. It will also enable Canada's more than 300 synchrotron light users — in fields as diverse as biology, chemistry, geology, materials science, physics and medicine — to compete internationally.



## Manitoba...Creating a Better, Healthier Tomorrow

*Times have never been as good for research and development, and the current emphasis on innovation funding is positive. The St. Boniface General Hospital Magnetic Resonance Imaging project would not have been so successful without the support and funding of Western Economic Diversification.*

— Harry Schultz, Director, Business Operations, St. Boniface General Hospital, Winnipeg

With the support of Western Economic Diversification, Manitoba is emerging as a centre for medical research and technology commercialization. The Institute of Biondiagnostics in Winnipeg is developing advanced Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) technologies to be commercialized through startup companies. WD has facilitated this commercialization by funding a number of MRI demonstration sites.

WD has also been instrumental in the development of the St. Boniface General Hospital Research Centre by contributing to its MRI research centre, Centre of Health Research for the Elderly, filmless radiology network and the new Clinical Research Institute.

At the University of Manitoba, WD is contributing to a \$25-million research and development centre that will explore opportunities in nutraceutical and functional food production. Catering to consumers who want to use natural foods and food by-products to maintain their health, this industry is expected to generate annual sales of \$500 billion worldwide in the next decade.





## Entrepreneurship: The Spirit of the West

*When we started out, we were working out of our spare bedrooms at home. We spoke with a Client Service Officer at Western Economic Diversification who was able to analyze our needs and point us in the right direction. Obtaining assistance from WD in the form of its two wage assistance programs (First Jobs in Science and Technology, International Trade Personnel Program), Redengine was able to hire two new staff at a time when there were only three employees in the company. Today, Redengine consists of 25 staff and is one of the fastest growing companies in Alberta. Our current success wouldn't have been possible without encouragement, advice and assistance from WD.*

— Tom Ogaranko, CEO/CFO and Co-Owner,  
Redengine Inc., Edmonton

Small businesses are the driving spirit behind nearly 80 per cent of new jobs in Canada and the West. To fuel this valuable source of economic growth, Western Economic Diversification supports the willingness of entrepreneurs to take risks, devise new products and services, and create jobs through their hard work. In British Columbia alone, WD and its network partners provide services to more than 400,000 small business clients each year.

WD promotes business development and entrepreneurship by:

- providing value-added skills development, including seminars and workshops
- offering advisory services, including assessments and business plan reviews
- facilitating access to capital
- enhancing export readiness
- helping companies sell to government
- enabling companies to hire graduates for international marketing and advanced technology projects
- encouraging networking with other businesses to increase productivity and competitiveness.

Client Service Officers in seven regional WD offices are helping entrepreneurs and small and medium-sized enterprises grow and become successful in today's global economy. A recent client satisfaction survey indicates that 77 per cent of WD clients were satisfied or very satisfied with the programs and services they received.

Clients also provided high ratings for the helpfulness and courtesy of WD personnel, the respect for confidentiality, the hours of service and the clarity of information provided. Where appropriate, clients are also referred to WD's network partners, financial institution partners and other governmental organizations for assistance. Most recently, WD has developed a program with the Canadian Innovation Centre, which supports innovation by providing funding for feasibility studies for new inventions.

*I attended a few seminars sponsored by your organization (WD) and would like to extend my gratitude and appreciation for the quality of these seminars, particularly, their pertinence to small business environments.*

— James J. Letwin, Technology Consultant,  
Methods Technologies Services, Winnipeg





# Entrepreneurship: The Spirit of the West

## Accelerating the Adoption of E-business

The Government of Canada and an increasing number of Canadian businesses recognize that electronic commerce capabilities are essential to maintaining a competitive position in a digital economy. Western Economic Diversification is striving to ensure that all western businesses are aware of the opportunities associated with e-business as well as the risks of ignoring it.

To this end, WD is offering programs and services that increase the use of e-business applications, enhance access to the Internet, encourage market development in rural areas and improve job opportunities relating to on-line business.



## International Trade Personnel Program

*Prior to our expansion into the international marketplace, we took on the challenge of rapidly expanding our client base while maintaining high levels of customer services and support. WD funding has allowed us to maintain these high levels of customer care and to enhance them as well.*

— Stephen Khan, General Manager, Management Information Group, Edmonton

Western Economic Diversification enables small and medium-sized enterprises to capitalize on the tremendous growth in international trade by helping them hire recent graduates to develop global markets. This initiative benefits both groups: businesses gain access to well-trained talent and new customers while students gain experience and new opportunities.

## First Jobs in Science and Technology Program

*Without the help of Western Economic Diversification, we wouldn't be where we are today. We've had some phenomenally talented young people working for us. Without the First Jobs in Science and Technology Program, a company of our size could never afford so many engineers – it's marvelous. A big bouquet to WD!*

— Sandra Atkins, President, Nova Pole International Inc., Vancouver

This WD initiative is providing small and medium-sized enterprises with the opportunity to hire recent graduates of science, technology and engineering programs. First Jobs in Science and Technology gives these companies the chance to hire skilled employees and gives graduates the chance to gain valuable experience in their chosen fields.



# Entrepreneurship: The Spirit of the West

## Loan Investment Fund Program

*Western Economic Diversification went out of its way to identify the government connections necessary to find the information we needed. The loan program has definitely opened the doors to wider marketing opportunities.*

— Ken Vanstraellen, President,  
Freedom Concepts Inc., Winnipeg

Western Economic Diversification established the Loan Investment Fund Program to help emerging and export-oriented small businesses gain access to financing. Through partnerships with financial institutions, WD has established nearly 40 loan funds that have made a potential \$283 million available from private sector lenders. WD has committed up to \$41 million to cover a portion of any potential losses. Over 1,300 loans totalling \$134 million have been approved to date by participating financial institutions.

Among these partnerships, WD has worked with credit unions in Western Canada to create several micro-loan funds for very small companies and Aboriginal businesses that do not have sufficient assets or credit history to obtain conventional financing. These micro-loan funds have resulted in over 900 loans totalling \$12 million, with an average loan size of about \$13,000.

In 1999, an evaluation of the Loan Investment Fund Program confirmed that the loan funds address a gap between traditional bank lending and the availability of venture capital. Based on these findings, WD has created several new micro-loan funds and has introduced an additional fund for knowledge-based businesses.

## Western Canada Business Service Network

Western Economic Diversification has established the Western Canada Business Service Network to help entrepreneurs find what they need to establish a business or make it grow. Services range from marketing information and funding options to counselling and support. The network comprises over 100 points of service and includes WD offices and other partners.

### • Canada Business Service Centres

Canada Business Service Centres (CBSCs) are managed through federal-provincial cooperative agreements that provide a single, seamless gateway to information for business. In Western Canada, these centres are part of WD's service delivery network with hub offices located in Vancouver, Edmonton, Saskatoon and Winnipeg.





## Entrepreneurship: The Spirit of the West

The centres compile and maintain an extensive database of business and trade information from federal, provincial, municipal and non-government organizations to provide fast, accurate and comprehensive information on a wide variety of programs, services and regulations. Users may access this wealth of data using the medium of their choice – telephone, Internet or fax-on-demand. People interested in starting or growing a business may also call or visit in person to consult a business information specialist or conduct business research in the specifically developed business information libraries available at the centres.

Other services include topical business seminars, on-line business products such as the Interactive Business Planner and a useful collection of business Info Guides. The services of the CBSCs are extended to rural and northern communities by a network of CBSC regional access and Aboriginal service sites throughout the West. Each centre offers toll-free telephone service and Internet access at: [www.cbsc.org](http://www.cbsc.org).

### • Community Futures Development Corporations

Community Futures Development Corporations (CFDCs) are volunteer-led, nonprofit organizations that take a grassroots approach to economic development. Their primary focus is job creation in areas outside major urban centres. The 90 CFDCs across the West deliver a variety of services that include strategic economic planning, technical and advisory services, loans to small and medium-sized enterprises, self-employment assistance programs, and employment programs aimed at youth and entrepreneurs with disabilities.

CFDCs have a common goal – to build strong and vibrant communities through economic development and diversification. They focus on integrating the social and economic needs of their communities and on developing a vision for the future.

Since 1995, WD's Community Futures Development Corporations have arranged loans totalling over \$288 million to more than 12,000 entrepreneurs, creating over 35,000 jobs. Their success is based on local people creating local solutions to local challenges.





## Entrepreneurship: The Spirit of the West

### • Women's Enterprise Initiative

Women entrepreneurs are playing an increasingly important role in creating and operating small businesses across Canada. In many ways, women are leading the entrepreneurial wave — starting businesses at twice the rate of their male counterparts. In the year 2000, women entrepreneurs in the West led more than 300,000 businesses, accounting for 36% of all self-employed entrepreneurs in this part of the country. These numbers are increasing rapidly.

However, women face unique challenges and often begin their ventures with entirely different priorities than men have. Many encounter barriers and a lack of support. Western Economic Diversification helps to remove some of these barriers by supporting Women's Enterprise Centres in each of the western provinces. These centres provide business advice and information, networking and mentoring specially designed for these clients. Since 1994, WD's Women's Enterprise Initiative has provided over 700 loans worth about \$17 million to assist women in starting or growing a business.



### Celebrating Women Entrepreneurs

As part of Women's Enterprise Week, a number of western women were honoured for their entrepreneurial achievements. In Starbuck, Manitoba, 19-year-old Angie Johnson has been designing and distributing custom clothes through her company, Depth Bomb Clothing, for three years. In Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Irene Friesen and Linda Hitchings of GardenWare Canada Distributors Ltd. quintupled sales for their patented, vase-shaped rain barrel in less than two years. In Grande Prairie, Alberta, Debbie Reid established her marketing and advertising business after receiving counselling and startup financing. And in British Columbia, Darlene Ranking, owner of Delectables by Dar, distributes her gourmet condiments to large grocery chains and small western distributors.





# Entrepreneurship: The Spirit of the West

## • Francophone Economic Development Organizations

*We are very pleased with the creation of this initiative, which will allow the Conseil de développement économique des municipalités bilingues du Manitoba to forge even closer ties with Western Economic Diversification and with other partners.*

— Mariette Mulaire, Executive Director,  
Conseil de développement économique  
des municipalités bilingues du Manitoba

In April 2001, Western Economic Diversification welcomed Francophone Economic Development Organizations (FEDOs) to the Western Canada Business Service Network. FEDOs enhance the vitality of minority language communities in Western Canada and assist in their economic development.

These independent entities have their own boards of directors with broad representation from their respective provinces. Board members are knowledgeable about business development as well as the challenges facing francophone entrepreneurs.

Support from WD enables these four provincial organizations to provide enhanced services to Francophones — including training, business and community economic development, access to capital, information services, marketing advice, networking and mentoring.

## • Aboriginal Economic Development

WD's Aboriginal Strategy tailors the department's activities to meet the specific needs of Aboriginal entrepreneurs and to address gaps in business service delivery. The primary objective is to increase the number of Aboriginal businesses as well as their size and their markets.

To achieve this, WD works in partnership with Aboriginal Community Futures Development Corporations and other Aboriginal organizations in the West to help them deliver business counselling and advisory services to their clients. Throughout the West, there are seven wholly Aboriginal Community Futures offices and eight others where the majority of clients are Aboriginal. Other network partners provide comprehensive business services to Aboriginal people and to communities.

WD provided support to establish the Edmonton Aboriginal Business Development Centre, which offers information, counselling and micro loans to small Edmonton-based Aboriginal businesses. Working with the Alberta Indian Economic Developers Network and the Council of Aboriginal Native Development Officers, the Aboriginal Business Service Network was also established to improve access to business information, services and training.





## Partnerships: The Strength of the West

The strength of Western Canada comes from the spirit of cooperation that built communities and shaped the lives of the people within them. Today, the ability to cooperate is not just a community resource: It is an international necessity.

Western Economic Diversification recognizes that opportunities available in the West are enhanced when connections to Canada and the rest of the world are strengthened. Organizations that cooperate and create partnerships will be the ones to succeed in the changing face and pace of a global economy.

To encourage the continued success of the West, WD works to develop and strengthen partnerships with different levels of government, industry, universities, volunteer organizations and other interest groups.

### Western Economic Partnership Agreements

These federal-provincial agreements focus on strategic areas of interest to create new employment opportunities, support economic infrastructure and promote business development. Western Economic Diversification has provided \$80 million in funding over five years to the western provinces, which is matched by the provincial governments, creating a total investment of \$160 million to encourage:

- innovation and growth of knowledge-based sectors of the economy
- entrepreneurship among youth and Aboriginal people
- community economic development in urban, rural and northern areas
- tourism, trade and investment promotion.

Each partnership agreement promotes national economic policies and priorities while addressing the unique needs and opportunities of each province. In British Columbia, this has translated into funding for fuel cell development, information technology, ocean industries and community economic development. In Alberta, the agreement has funded research and development, the use of technology by small business, micro-systems technology, telecommunications and the expansion of innovation.

The Saskatchewan agreement supports new economic infrastructure, tourism products, export and marketing initiatives, and rural and northern development. The Manitoba agreement supports innovation, entrepreneurship and economic development through partnerships with local research groups and community organizations.





# Partnerships: The Strength of the West

## Infrastructure Canada Program

Western Economic Diversification delivers the Infrastructure Canada program, a \$550-million federal investment in the West, which leverages matching funds through partnerships with provincial and municipal governments. Municipalities play an important role in program design and the development of projects that address the most pressing local needs. The program focuses on projects that address “green” or environmentally friendly infrastructure such as water and wastewater systems, water management, solid waste management, recycling and improving the energy efficiency of facilities owned by municipal governments.



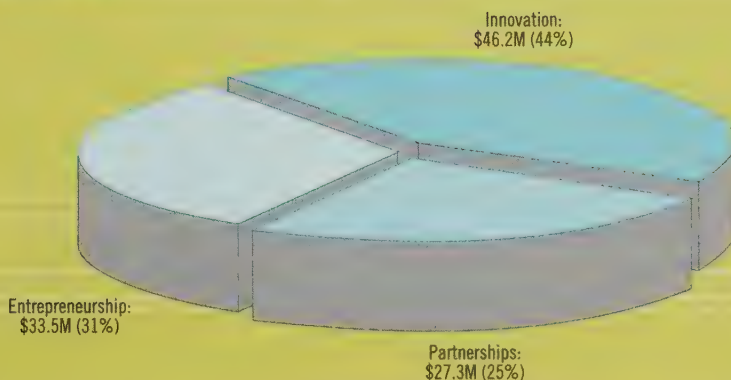
## Urban Development and Communities in Transition

Western Economic Diversification has been successful in cooperative approaches that bring together government, industry and community partners to address urban and community development issues. These efforts have played an important role in establishing multi-party agreements such as the Winnipeg Development Agreement, the Vancouver Agreement and the Pacific Salmon Fishery Community Economic Adjustment Agreement with coastal B.C. fishing towns.

These agreements were tailored to reflect local needs and resources. WD has served as an effective partner in addressing issues such as economic adjustment, urban renewal, job creation among disadvantaged groups, skills development, support for innovation and the creation of new economic opportunities.

## WD Projects Approved in 2000/01

Total Approved \$107M

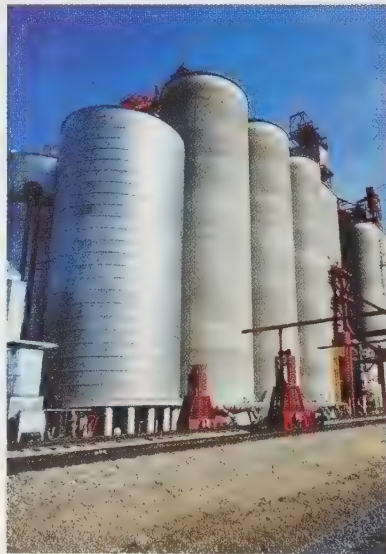




# Economic Research and Advocacy: The Value of the West

*Western Canadians stand at the intersection of dramatic change in both their region and the global environment ... The choices we make today will have a decisive impact on the prosperity of the West for generations to come.*

— From the Introduction to *Building The New West*, an initiative of the Canada West Foundation sponsored by Western Economic Diversification Canada in partnership with provincial governments and private donors



## Economic Research

The first step in developing new policies and initiatives for western Canadians is understanding the region's needs, aspirations and opportunities. WD sponsors a select number of research projects that lead to better information in critical areas such as opportunities in medical research, start-up and growth trends in small business, research infrastructure capacity, urban growth challenges, and broad economic and social trends. WD usually funds these research initiatives in partnership with provincial governments, academic institutions, think tanks and private sector donors.

*Through investment in innovation, research and knowledge, Canada has become the place to be in the 21st century.*

— Dr. Henry Friesen, Chair of the Board of Genome Canada





## Economic Research and Advocacy: The Value of the West

Recent research projects sponsored in whole or part by WD are available on the WD Web site or by contacting WD Communications. Some of these projects include:

*Shaping the Future of Health Research and Economic Development in Western Canada* – a vision, arising from consultations led by Dr. Henry Friesen, to make Western Canada a global region of choice in health research, innovation, and commercialization.

*A Portrait of Small Business Growth and Employment in Western Canada* – a study of trends in the emergence, growth and concentration of western Canadian small businesses over the past 10 years.

*A Study of Western Canadian Research Infrastructure* – an examination of existing research and development capacity in Western Canada.

*Guidelines for Federal Policy Priorities in Urban Areas* – an assessment of the Government of Canada's role in addressing the opportunities and challenges facing urban centres.

*Building the New West: A Framework for Regional Economic Prosperity* – a multi-year research and public consultation project designed to explore the strategic position of Western Canada in the global economy.

### Advocacy

Once an understanding of a key issue is achieved, WD often undertakes advocacy activities to ensure western needs are taken into account in national policy decisions. Advocacy activities can involve working with stakeholders to achieve the synergy necessary for collective action, such as establishing the Nanotechnology Institute in Edmonton. Strongly supportive of a greater research capacity in Alberta, WD helped to facilitate discussions between the National Research Council (NRC), Economic Development Edmonton, the University of Alberta and the Alberta government. A national workshop sponsored by the NRC, WD and iCORE (Province of Alberta) brought together researchers, federal and provincial officials, and industry to identify opportunities in nanotechnology.

Advocacy can also involve making sure western firms benefit from Government of Canada procurement contracts. Though competition is rigorous and the requirements often complex, WD makes sure that western bidders know about opportunities to compete for contracts. For example, WD worked with the Alberta Aerospace Association to prepare a workshop for western Canadian companies on business opportunities relating to major Crown projects.



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